



INSIDE ISSUE:

Sacred Standing	1
New Judge Appointment	2
ACA Accreditation	2
Yoga Programming	2
Direct Care Staff	3
Average Length of Stay	4

- REHAB REVIEW -

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"A Pathway to Change"

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Sacred Standing

By: Mike Higgins



"A belief in the "sacred standing" of children carries us forward . . ."

It was a glorious September day. A touch of autumn cool tinged the morning air, but the sun was blazing clear and bright by noon.

It was September 5, 2000 – opening day for an experiment in juvenile correctional treatment at the Miami Valley Juvenile Rehabilitation Center (MVJRC) in Xenia, Ohio.

The day of over-crowded juvenile prisons was at its peak, but the social pendulum of criminal justice was poised to swing away from punishment-minded corrections towards rehabilitation-minded treatment. Ohio's juvenile Community Correctional Facilities (CCF) were being built and MVJRC was the latest edition of what would become a network of 12 CCFs that currently dot the state map.

The original CCF mandate was simple: introduce a "community" component to correctional treatment, keep placements regional and include drug/alcohol therapy. There wasn't much of a blueprint beyond that, and, as it turned out, we would have a lot to learn over the next 10 years about running an effective juvenile rehabilitation program.

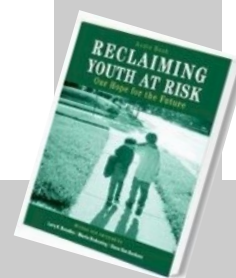
So there we were on the first day, a motley staff in training and no kids in residence. It wasn't until November that we received our first resident! We had lots of time for training, but we also had lots of time for dreaming, and there was no one better to breathe life into that dream than our motivational leader, Dr. Robin Herman ("Doc").

Now, Doc was a story-teller extraordinaire. One of his biggest legacies to the MVJRC program was a collection of 56 parables that is still the heart and soul of our daily Character Development Curriculum. Another legacy of Doc's was the Circle of Courage that structures the Character Development Program and inspired the MVJRC logo which embodies our core identity. The Circle of Courage is an idea based on a Lakota Sioux developmental child-rearing model that was introduced to the world through an important book called *Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future*. This book was first published in 1988 and became an important treatment-based counterpoint in the punishment-oriented 1990s. Dr. Herman was strongly influenced by *Reclaiming Youth at Risk* and eventually befriended one of the co-authors, Dr. Martin Brokenleg. In the course of their acquaintance, Dr. Herman visited Dr. Brokenleg in South Dakota and spent time on the Lakota reservation. This was a powerful experience for Dr. Herman. The collected wisdom gained from his journey was brought back to MVJRC to inspire the first generation of MVJRC staff in training.

Of all the training we received in the fall of 2000, the idea of "sacred standing" has resonated with me over the years. Dr. Herman learned from Dr. Brokenleg that the Lakota Sioux translation for the word "child" is "sacred standing" (also translated as "standing sacred" and "sacred being").



Mike Higgins



Continued on page. 2 . . .

... Continued from page 1

This is in contrast to the idea prevalent in contemporary American society that punishment is required to shape children. Given the cynical mentality towards juvenile delinquency that prevailed through the 1990s, this idea of respect for children was a welcome message for us in 2000. Here was an idea that could make the world a better place! Here was an idea we could get behind!

While Dr. Herman moved on in 2004 and has since passed away, his belief in the greatness of people and the dignity of children became the foundation of the culture of the MVJRC program that continues to this day.

Certainly, there is a time and place for punishment in the MVJRC program, but this is balanced in a healthy way with an emphasis on respect for the youth we serve. This idea – a belief in the “sacred standing” of children – carries us forward and continues to inform all aspects of our work. And, although there are many therapeutic layers built into the MVJRC program, it is this basic attitude that is most important. As Doc used to say, “If the adults are alright, the kids will be alright”.

~ *M. Higgins*

New Judge Appointed by Governor Kasich



Judge Tornichio was appointed to office on August 31, 2015 by Governor John Kasich, following the retirement of Judge Hutcheson in May of 2015. Tornichio officially took the bench at the Greene County Juvenile Court (MVJRC's employer) on October 1, 2015. He received his Bachelor's degree from Wright State University and his law degree from the University of Toledo College of Law.

Judge Tornichio began his law career in Ohio on May 17, 1999. His experience includes serving as Assistant Attorney for the Greene County Prosecutor's Office, Prosecuting Attorney for the Village of Waynesville Mayor's Court, and many years of working in private practice. He joined the Prosecutor's Office in 1996, and has been working on adult criminal cases since 2003. He has served as a Commissioner on the Ohio Supreme Court Board of Character and Fitness, Executive Chair for Greene County Republican Party Central Committee, and Chair of Beavercreek Planning Commission. He is currently a board member of the Beavercreek Chamber of Commerce and of the Miami Valley Military Affairs Association.

ACA Re-Accreditation/100%!



MVJRC successfully passed an American Correctional Association (ACA) audit October 26 and 27 with 100% compliance on over 300 different standards of operation. This is our 10th year of accreditation. We received initial accreditation in 2007 and then re-accreditation in 2010 and 2013 and now 2016 after confirmation at the ACA Accreditation Panel Hearings in New Orleans in January. Each accreditation cycle has required an immense amount of effort, but this past cycle was especially satisfying in that the processes involved

have become so deeply ingrained in our daily operations. You could equate it to how an athlete practices certain techniques for years and then all of a sudden, muscle memory takes over and the techniques are effectively mastered. Over the years, the accreditation process has been our most important management tool and has elevated the quality of everything we do. We are especially proud of the MVJRC staff for their dedication and daily contribution towards 100% compliance!

Yoga Programming



Project Innerlight, an outreach foundation associated with a local Yoga & Wellness studio is offering yoga, meditation, and stress reduction techniques weekly at MVJRC. Yoga is an ancient practice, said to be 2,000 years old. The physical postures and breath work involved in practicing yoga were specifically developed to help create a calm and still mind and body in order to prepare for deeper concentration involved with sitting meditation. The health benefits of yoga and mindfulness meditation are well documented and far ranging. Those that practice yoga regularly report improved strength, breathing, weight regulation, increased flexibility, balance, focus, and overall good health. Research also validates the therapeutic benefits associated with yoga and meditation. Yogic techniques have been used to address depression, anxiety, trauma, and addiction and have been

introduced to incarcerated adults and youth with reported positive effects.

Ohio's Efforts to Reform Juvenile Prisons is National Model

By: Cory Shaffer of Cleveland.com

http://www.cleveland.com/metro/index.ssf/2015/10/ohios_efforts_to_reform_juveni.html

COLUMBUS, Ohio -- Twenty-five years after Ohio's juvenile prison system was on the brink of crisis, the state has become a model for how it treats teenage offenders, according to a report released Monday.

By sending teenagers to community-based alternative programs instead of traditional prisons, the state has dramatically decreased the number of incarcerated teenagers and saved millions of taxpayer dollars, the Juvenile Justice Coalition said in the report.

Still, the center found areas where Ohio can improve, said the group's executive director, Erin Davies.

"Ohio's de-incarceration programs are less expensive and more effective than prisons when youth are matched to the right programs," Davies said. "We must continue to urgently embrace what works so we can give all Ohio youth, families, and communities the best chance for success."

Reaching the breaking point

Ohio's juvenile prison systems in the early 1990's were "at a breaking point," according to the Columbus-based nonprofit's report.

In 1992, there were nearly 2,500 children locked up in the state's 11 juvenile correctional facilities, which were built to hold just 1,400. It was projected that within a few years the number of juvenile inmates would hit 4,000, the group said.

So the state lawmakers created a pilot program in 1993 in Cuyahoga County and eight others that sent grant money local courts used to divert non-violent offenders from youth prisons and into supervised, community-based programs. Those programs connected the children with family counseling, mental health and substance abuse treatment programs and other services that they otherwise were unlikely to get.

The number of incarcerated children in those nine counties dropped by more than 40 percent in the first year, and 85 percent of the courts in the program said they were pleased with the results.

Lawmakers expanded the program statewide a year later and saw similar results.

This year that state housed less than 500 children in youth prisons, just one-fifth the number from 1992,

Some of the programs cut the recidivism rate in half, all while saving the state millions of dollars in juvenile costs, according the report.

The state pays about \$560 a day for each juvenile in prison, according to the report. Putting a child into the community-based programs costs taxpayers about \$200 a day per child, the report said.

Direct Care Staff: Shawn Brooks, Youth Leader



Shawn Brooks began his career here at MVJRC as a Youth Leader in March of 2013. He originally planned to work here for just a summer but discovered that he really enjoys working with the youth and the schedule it provides. He also states he really enjoys the comradery between all the staff members.

Shawn grew up as a "Navy brat," as his Father was a Sailor in the Navy. He lived in many places growing up, including California, Hawaii, and Alaska. In 1984, Shawn moved to Ohio from California. He's been married to his high school sweetheart for 25 years and has a 24 year old daughter named Monica.

One major interest of Shawn's is weight lifting, which he has been doing since he was 14. Shawn states, "It's something I've always been interested in." He has participated in Strong Man and Power Lifting contests since 1998. He's won several championships, including the Ohio State Power Lifting Championship, and he's also participated in the National Strong Man Championship. Shawn recently set the Masters Dead Lift U.S. record in Missouri by dead lifting 950 pounds! He's currently qualified to participate in the June 2016 Nationals where he hopes to earn a spot in the Masters World's Strongest Man.

During the interview, Shawn had only good things to say about working at MVJRC. When asked what's most rewarding about his job he spoke of how much he loves hearing positive feedback from the youth. They are glad to be given another chance through their treatment program. He also says it's a challenge for him not to worry about what happens to the youth after their release, "I worry about their futures."

Shawn loves helping the youth while they are here, he states it gives him a sense of fulfillment. "The main thing I try to create for the youth is a relaxed and positive atmosphere." He loves the direction that MVJRC is taking in caring for the youth and enjoys being part of it.



MVJRC Average Length of Stay

Average Length of Stay Total: 163 days (5.4 months)

Average Length of Stay for Sexual Offender Treatment Track: 201 days (6.7 months)

Average Length of Stay for General Treatment Track: 152 days (5.1 months)

Note: MVJRC's average length of stay has declined dramatically since 2010 – by about 25% or approximately 50 days on average:

AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	AVG
Days	214	263	199	234	220	252	224	197	174	175	152	163	205.58

This is a direct result of CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) Program Conversion (2009-2012) in coordination with the University of Cincinnati – Department of Criminal Justice and the Ohio Department of Youth Services. This program conversion was based on detailed program assessments in relation to correctional treatment best practices and routine monitoring by Dr. Megan Schrantz (UC), which continues to the present day. The most impactful outcome of this process on average length of stay was the establishment of youth assessment processes – specifically, the Ohio Youth Assessment System (OYAS) which measures youth level of risk to recidivate and appropriateness/likely effectiveness of incarceration.

The OYAS allows the MVJRC Treatment Team to make informed decisions regarding what is in the best interests of the child vs. just keeping beds filled. The result has been a decrease in MVJRC's average daily population, although the average number of admissions/referrals has remained steady:

ANNUAL ADMISSIONS	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	AVG
Admissions	45	42	43	43	47	32	44	47	52	45	40	49	44.08

The MVJRC Treatment Team is greatly encouraged by this trend in which length of stay is partly informed by level of risk. It has allowed for a more manageable population which has resulted in increased safety and attention for the youth in residence. The benefits of this positive trend are summarized as follows:

- Decreased confinement time.
- Decreased behavioral and mental health seclusion.
- Decreased administrative over-load.
- Decreased length of stay.
- Decreased costs.
- Increased attention.
- Increased treatment.
- Increased PREA compliance – 1:8 ratio.
- Increased job satisfaction.
- Increased separation of residents by risk level.
- Increased separation of residents by gender.
- Increased unit placement options = decreased peer conflict.

Community Partners

We are grateful to everyone who gives to MVJRC and are pleased to acknowledge their contributions here. We are better able to perform our mission here with caring community members who support us with their generous financial and in-kind donations. Please accept our apology if your name is missing, misspelled, or listed incorrectly. Please call 937-562-4150 to correct this error. Again, our sincerest thanks and appreciation for your willingness to contribute and support our mission and facility.



Carriage House Quilters
 Cedarville University Men's Baseball Team & Coaches
 Cedarville University Men & Women's Basketball Team
 Brandy Copfer
 Emily Emery
 Evangelical United Methodist Church
 Gary and Sheila Fauble
 Formation Studio—Alan Jazak
 Lori Fulk
 Goodwill Easter Seals
 Terri Green
 Greene County Bar Association
 Greene County Building Services— Carl Geisler
 Greene County Master Gardeners— Macy Reynolds
 Greene County Parks & Trails— Chrisbell Bednar
 Greene County Soil & Water Conservation— Don Leeds
 Tawnya Henry
 Mike Higgins
 Ronald Hightower
 LaKeithia Jenkins
 Don and Marian Lewis
 Melody Anderson
 Chanel Watkins

Tom Watkins
 Karen & Joe Angles
 Stephanie Puckett
 Robert Perez
 Dwain and Ruth Hill
 Shawn and Sharon McCormick
 McAfee Heating & Air Conditioning—Greg McAfee
 Michael's House
 John & Terri Nehr
 Pet Therapy—Gerry Coen
 Port William United Methodist Church Members
 Project Jericho—Springfield, OH—Beth Dixon
 Rain Brothers—Columbus, OH
 Dr. David Romano
 Rural King
 Cathy Satter
 ScreenPlay Printing—Brian Liming
 Wilberforce University Men's Basketball Team
 Wilberforce University Men & Women's Coaches
 Wilberforce Masters of Rehab Counseling Program—
 Dr. Robin Moore-Cooper

MVJRC Wish List

Arts and Crafts:

- Sketch Pads
- Acrylic Paint
- Paint Brushes
- Glue
- Paper
- Crayons
- Construction Paper (all colors)
- Masking Tape (low adhesive)
- Coloring Books



Hygiene Items:

- Toothbrushes
- Colgate Toothpaste
- Speedstick or Suave/
Dove Deodorant
- Pick, combs and brushes
- Suave Shampoo
- Suave Conditioner
- Vaseline Intensive Care
or Suave lotions
- Chap Stick
- Sanitary Napkins
- L'Oreal go 360 Cleaner
Deep Facial Cleaner

Games:

- Ping-Pong Paddles/Balls
- Wii Games
- Playing Cards
- Word Search Puzzles
- Crossword Puzzle Books
- Chess Set
- Checker Set
- Foosball table
- Corn Hole Game



Food/Snack Items:

- Popcorn
- Cheesy Snacks
- Starburst
- Candy Bars
- Chips
- Little Debbie's
- Fruit roll-ups
- Granola bars



Miscellaneous Items:

- Blankets for Twin Beds
- Headphones
- Batteries—AA, AAA

Donations may be sent to: **MVJRC, Attn: Emily Emery, 2100 Greene Way Blvd., Xenia, OH 45385**
 A contribution letter will be sent to you for your donations for tax purposes.

MIAMI VALLEY JUVENILE REHABILITATION CENTER

2100 Greene Way Blvd.
Xenia, OH 45385

OFFICE: (937) 562-4150
FAX: (937) 562-4170

www.mvjrc.com

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Miami Valley Juvenile Rehabilitation Center Affiliation

The Miami Valley Juvenile Rehabilitation Center (MVJRC) is a Community Correctional Facility (CCF) established by the Ohio Department of Youth Services. The facility is part of the Greene County Juvenile Justice Complex which also includes the Greene County Juvenile Court and the Greene County Juvenile Detention Center.

Our Mission

The Miami Valley Juvenile Rehabilitation Center is committed to the rehabilitation of Ohio juvenile felony offenders to improve public safety. We are committed to fulfilling this mission with pride by providing a safe, clean setting where pro-social behavior is taught, modeled and practiced at every opportunity.

Miami Valley Juvenile Rehabilitation Center
2100 Greene Way Blvd.
Xenia, Ohio 45385

TO:

MAP to MVJRC

Dayton, OH Area

MVJRC is about 15 minutes east on US 35 to Xenia, OH. Take 35B into town.

(A) MVJRC—Xenia, OH Area

Coming into Xenia from 35, turn left onto Progress Drive, then turn left onto Greene Way Blvd. First Bldg on the right.

